

AHRQ's Primary Care Practice Facilitation Forum

This email newsletter is the first step in building a learning network for individuals with an interest in practice facilitation. We are using this listserve to share perspectives on questions and answers submitted by learning forum members, as well as resources, research articles, and events of interest.

August 3, 2012

Perspectives from the Field

What are some of the interviewing techniques and methods that you have found effective in finding professionals for PF roles?

*Below are some perspectives from PF expert **Marly McMillen Beelman, MBA, Partner, CMMD Advisory Group.***

Other programs are likely to have different perspectives, depending on their focus, context, and other factors. How does your experience compare?

Please submit your responses to PracticeFacilitation@mathematica-mpr.com and we will share them in upcoming newsletters.

Marly McMillen Beelman: When hiring a Practice Education Facilitator (PEF) for your project, the first rule of thumb is to be sure to include background checks and reference feedback in your selection process. Beyond that, you have a range of options available to you in selecting and hiring candidates. According to Jim Collins, author of the book *Good to Great*, having the right people on your teams is critical to your organization's success. From that perspective, I have always valued team participatory skills more highly than technical skills. You can usually teach technical skills, but having good people skills is not always a learnable trait. This is especially true for PEFs who will be interacting with practices and need to have strong interpersonal skills.

Once the job is posted and you have several resumes on hand, tier applicants into three categories: those who do not meet the skills of the position; those whose skills are adequate; and those who seem to be a perfect fit and need to be interviewed.

Begin with your "perfect fit" resumes. If this is a manageable list of individuals that are all in the same geographic area, go ahead and schedule interviews. However, if the list is still rather large or if you have applicants that would need to travel for the interview, you might want to begin

with a phone interview first.

If you're the sole person interviewing candidates, you can consider creating an exercise that each candidate responds to in order to help you with your assessment. An example of an exercise would be to provide a practice scenario and ask the candidate to recommend a strategy to help the practice make improvements. When you're ready to begin interviews, having a consistent set of questions to ask each candidate can help you select the right person. See this blog post for a list of some of [my favorite candidate interview questions](#). You especially want to avoid yes/no questions because it doesn't draw enough response from applicants.

If you have an existing team of PEFs, it can be helpful to include a team interview as part of the process. Be sure to have a rating sheet for each team member to fill out that assesses the candidate. Categories on the rating sheet could include: technical skills, teamwork skills, practice experience, and understanding of the position/organization.

Getting the right people on your team is critical to your organization's success and having a thorough interview strategy can help you get there.

Resources

Check out the [PCPF Updates page](#) at the PCMH Resource Center (www.pcmh.ahrq.gov) for information about upcoming learning opportunities, previous editions of the PCPF eNewsletter, and slides and audio from previous Practice Facilitation Webinars.

Please also visit the PCMH Resource Center at www.pcmh.ahrq.gov to explore white papers, briefs, a searchable citations database, and other resources related to the Patient-Centered Medical Home and primary care improvement.

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